

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 04264 231954Z
ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PE, EC
SUBJECT: EL TELEGRAFO COMMENTARY ON PERU

REF: LIMA 5420

1. LIMA'S EL COMERCIO DID NOT EXAGGERATE THE BITTERNESS IN THE EL TELEGRAFO ARTICLE. THAT ARTICLE APPEARED ON THE OP/ED PAGE AND WAS WRITTEN BY "ALJARCON." THE EMBASSY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE AUTHOR ALTHOUGH HE APPEARS REGULARLY IN EL TELEGRAFO.

2. THE ARTICLE IS A SLASHING CRITICISM OF PERU'S MILITARY GOVERNMENT. IT WAS WRITTEN JUST AFTER THE GOP EXILED A NUMBER OF LEFTISTS, INCLUDING SOME CANDIDATES FOR THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. SOME QUOTES WILL SERVE TO GIVE THE FLAVOR OF THE ARTICLE:

-- "...AFTER A DECADE OF MIS-GOVERNMENT, DURING WHICH THE PERUVIAN MILITARY HAS DONE NOTHING BESIDES VIOLATE PUBLIC LIBERTIES AND INDEBT THE COUNTRY WITHOUT LIMIT BY, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ATTEMPTING TO CONVERT THE COUNTRY INTO A MILITARY POWER AT THE COST OF A SCANDALOUS ARMAMENT RACE."

-- "NO ONE CAN DOUBT THAT THOSE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR
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THE GALLOPING CRISIS THAT PERU IS SUFFERING ARE HER LEADERS. TEN YEARS HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT FOR PERU TO FALL INTO THE DIREST POVERTY. POOR AND INDEBYED. THIS IS THE PRICE THE COUNTRY HAS HAD TO PAY FOR TEN YEARS OF MILITARY GOVERNMENTS..."

-- "AND THESE SAME MILITARY HAVE EXPERIMENTED IN PERU, JUST AS IS DONE IN A LOABRATORY WITH RATS, WITH POLITICAL

SYSTEMS RANGING FROM THE EXTREME LEFT TO THE CENTER RIGHT
WITH VELASCO ALVARADO AND WITH MORALES BERMUDEZ."

3. COMMENT: THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF ECUADOREANS, SOME
OF THEM WITH ACCESS TO THE MEDIA, WHO ARE PARANOID ON THE
SUBJECT OF PERU. AT THE SAME TIME, THE AUTHOR MIGHT HAVE
BEEN TAKING A BACK-HANDED SLAP AT ECUADOR'S OWN MILITARY.
THE LAST PARAGRAPH EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT PERU WILL
SOON RETURN TO A PURE DEMOCRACY WHERE HUMAN RIGHTS ARE
RECOGNIZED. IT ENDS: "BUT WE LONG FOR A DEMOCRACY
WITHOUT CONDITIONS, WITHOUT A GUARDIANSHIP OR A
PROTECTORATE. NOTHING BEHIND THE CIVILIAN POWER.
NOTHING OF BORDABERRY-TYPE GOVERNMENTS". ONE OF THE
MAJOR ELEMENTS IN THE CURRENT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN HERE,
OF COURSE, IS THE QUESTION OF MILITARY INFLUENCE OVER
THE SUCCEEDING GOVERNMENT. ALJARCON MIGHT HAVE BEEN USING
A TIME-HONORED JOURNALISTIC DEVICE TO ACCOMPLISH A
CRITICISM HE DID NOT WANT TO MAKE DIRECTLY.

4. EMBASSY POUCHING COPIES OF THE ARTICLE TO LIMA AND
DEPARTMENT.

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